



Occupational Health and Safety: Waste Audits

The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000, sets out regulations and guidelines for the management of a safe working environment. There are many hazards when sorting waste such as exposure to chemical, biological and physical risks (including corrosive chemicals, pathogenic and infectious substances, and sharp objects such as syringes and glass). Awareness of any possible hazards and an understanding of OH&S procedures and equipment is necessary to prevent incidents from occurring. As an employee you have the responsibility to take reasonable care of the health and safety of yourself and others in the work place and to co-operate with employers in their effort to comply with OH&S requirements.

A list of basic OH&S issues and precautions follows.

- ↻ Ensure that you do not endanger the health and safety of yourselves, your colleagues, or members of the public while at work.
- ↻ Be aware that you are not obligated to undertake extra tasks other than those explained to you for the waste audit.
- ↻ As soon as you notice any risks or hazards let a supervisor know.
- ↻ Report all incidents and accidents to a supervisor.
- ↻ Personal hygiene – Do not eat or drink during the sorting of waste. Wash hands before eating, blowing your nose, rubbing your eyes, etc.
- ↻ Keep the work place free of obstacles to prevent tripping and slips.
- ↻ Some items that you'll come across during the audit may be hazardous such as sharp objects, syringes, household chemicals and pathogenic substances. Make sure that you sort through the waste with caution at all times to minimise potential risks.
- ↻ Wear or utilise the safety clothing and equipment provided.
- ↻ Be aware of vehicle movement within the waste facility. Waste collection vehicles utilise the area around the audit work site. Stay clear of them and ensure your vehicle does not obstruct traffic.
- ↻ Do not lift or move heavy objects on your own. Some of the waste bags may be quite heavy and require the effort of more than one person to move them.

Safety Equipment

Safety equipment will be supplied for the waste audit. However, we ask that you bring your own protective footwear, either sturdy work boots or gumboots. Safety equipment provided will include:

- ↻ Overalls – to protect workers and their clothing;
- ↻ Gloves – PVC gloves to protect against corrosive substances, and leather gloves to protect against sharp objects;
- ↻ Tongs – to prevent injuries to hands;
- ↻ Goggles – to prevent dust, fumes, vapours, chemicals and sharp objects from damaging eyes;
- ↻ Face masks – to protect against dust inhalation.

It is important that the safety gear provided is in good condition. If you feel that the equipment you are using needs replacing please let a supervisor know as soon as possible so a replacement can be made.

Occupational Health and Safety Plan

NEWF Waste Reduction Project Audits

Date:

Sorting site:

Supervisor name:

First aid certificate holder:

First Aid kits: Audit work site

Fire extinguisher: Audit work site

Fire Hose: Audit work site

Closest hospital:

Emergency number: 000

Contingency Plans

Contingency safety plan for exploding gas cylinder

Action plan: Do not extinguish a burning leak unless the leak can then be promptly shut off. Evacuate to a safe area. Keep people away from the area. If there is a small fire, attempt to extinguish. For larger fires call the Fire Brigade and Police. If a person is not breathing, immediately apply CPR. Call ambulance and doctor.

Contingency safety plan for fire

Action plan: As above

Contingency safety plan for needle stick injury

Action plan: Alert all persons working on the audit. Calm person and drive them to the nearest hospital as soon as possible. Dispose of the needle into a sharps waste container.

Contingency safety plan for inhalation of toxic chemicals

Action plan: Alert all persons working on the audit. Locate source of toxicity and dispose of with caution into the appropriate bin. Identify toxin for treatment purposes. Calm person and drive them to the nearest hospital as soon as possible.

Contingency safety plan for skin absorption from chemical exposure

Action plan: Alert all persons working on the audit. Calm person and wash any corrosive substance off the skin, avoiding contact with substances. Locate source of toxicity and dispose of with caution into the appropriate bin. Identify toxin for treatment purposes. Drive them to the nearest hospital as soon as possible.

Contingency safety plan for major wounds and skin penetration injuries

Action plan: Calm person, call ambulance if necessary, if bleeding is severe apply pressure and elevate wound. Apply first aid for minor wounds that do not require medical assistance. For minor skin penetration injuries, if the appropriate immunisations have not previously been obtained, medical advice should be sought.

Contingency safety plan for eye irritation

Action plan: Alert all persons working on the audit. Calm person and wash eyes with eye wash solution. Locate source of toxicity (if relevant) and dispose of with caution into the appropriate bin. Identify toxin for treatment purposes. Drive them to the nearest hospital as soon as possible.

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